(b) if so, reasons for not utilising the amount; and

(c) details of the measures taken by Government to modernise Indian Army, Navy and Air Force?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) A number of proposals for procurement of weapon systems and equipment for modernisation of Armed Forces are at various stages of the procurement process, like technical evaluation/trails and finalisation of prices and contractual terms, etc. The funds catered for such proposals can only be utilsed on completion of these stages and on making payments as per contractual terms.

Modernisation of the Armed Forces is a continuous process and new procurement structures have been established to speed up the procurement process for Modernisation.

Indo-French strategic dialogue

113. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ninth round of Indo-French Strategic Dialogue was held in New Delhi; and

(b) if so, the details of the agreements reached?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. The ninth round of Indo-French Strategic Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 6th January, 2003.

(b) No agreements were signed during this Strategic Dialogue.

Punching of driving licences of traffic violators

114. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Licenses of traffic violators to be punched from January 30th, appearing in the Hindustan Times, New Delhi dated the 9th January, 2003;